

null
Diana T Fritz 05/24/2007 04:48:11 PM From DB/Inbox: Search Results

Cable
Text:

UNCLASSIFIED

SIPDIS
TELEGRAM

March 23, 2003

To: No Action Addressee
Action: Unknown
From: AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI (ABU DHABI 1377 - UNKNOWN)
TAGS: OIIP, KMDR
Captions: None
Subject: MEDIA REACTION: WAR IN IRAQ, IRAQI CIVILIAN
CASUALTIES, AND ABU DHABI TV WAR COVERAGE
Ref: None

UNCLAS ABU DHABI 01377

SIPDIS
CXABU:
ACTION: PAO
INFO: ECON POL AMB DCM
Laser1:
ACTION: PAO

DISSEMINATION: PAO
CHARGE: PROG

APPROVED: PAO:KVANDEVATE
DRAFTED: PAO:AALKHATIB
CLEARED: PAO:TPONCE

VZCZCADI468
OO RUEHC RUENAAA RUEKJCS RUEHZM RUEHLO RUEHFR
RHRMDAB RUCJACC RUCQSOC
DE RUEHAD #1377/01 0821149
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
O 231149Z MAR 03
FM AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8994
RUENAAA/SECNAV WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE
RUEHZM/GCC COLLECTIVE
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON 0614
RUEHFR/AMEMBASSY PARIS 0672
RHRMDAB/COMUSNAVCENT
RUCJACC/USCINCCENT MACDILL AFB FL//CCPA//
RUCQSOC/USCINCSOC MACDILL AFB FL//PA//

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 ABU DHABI 001377

SIPDIS

STATE FOR NEA/ARP; NEA/PPD; NEA/RA; INR/R/MR; PA;
INR/NESA; INR/B; IIP/G/NEA-SA
WHITE HOUSE FOR PRESS OFFICE
SECDEF FOR OASD/PA
USCINCCENT FOR POLAD
LONDON FOR GOLDRICH; PARIS FOR O'FRIEL

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [OIIP](#) [KMDR](#) [TC](#)
SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: WAR IN IRAQ, IRAQI CIVILIAN
CASUALTIES, AND ABU DHABI TV WAR COVERAGE

1. SUMMARY: THE WAR IN IRAQ AND IRAQI CIVILIAN CASUALTIES IN BASRA AND HALABJA DOMINATED COVERAGE IN UAE PRINT AND ELECTRONIC MEDIA. AN "AL ITTIHAD" EDITORIAL BLAMED THE IRAQI REGIME FOR THE WAR, AND A SAME-DAY ARTICLE REPORTED UAE FEDERAL NATIONAL COUNCIL SPEAKER AL KINDI AS SAYING THE SAME. AN "AKHBAR AL ARAB" EDITORIAL ASSERTED THAT THE DURATION AND INTENSITY OF THE WAR SURPRISED AMERICAN OFFICIALS. A "GULF NEWS" EDITORIAL COMMENTED ON U.S. PLANS FOR A POST-WAR IRAQI GOVERNMENT AND URGED UN ASSISTANCE. AN "AL BAYAN" EDITORIAL CLAIMED THE WORLD IS OPPOSED TO THE WAR. END SUMMARY.

2. HEADLINES FOR 3/23 INCLUDE:

--"AL KHALEEJ," "GULF TODAY," AND "AL BAYAN" CARRIED FRONT PAGE COLOR PHOTOGRAPHS OF WOUNDED IRAQI CIVILIANS. "AL KHALEEJ" AND "GULF TODAY" ALSO CARRIED A FULL INTERNAL PAGE OF SIMILAR PHOTOGRAPHS.
--"HUNDREDS IRAQIS WOUNDED AND KILLED BY AMERICAN WEAPONS OF DESTRUCTION," "DAY AND NIGHT BOMBING OF BAGHDAD AND ATTACKS ON BASRA, TIKRIT, KHOURMAL, AND HALABJA" AND SUB HEADLINES: "ISRAELI WEAPONS USED IN ATTACKS" AND "SHOCK AND AWE ORIGINALLY A JEWISH IDEA WITH AN AMERICAN IMPLEMENTATION." (AL KHALEEJ)
--"BAGHDAD IS BURNING" AND "IMAGES OF IRAQ FUEL ARAB AND WORLD FURY." (GULF TODAY)
--"BLOCKS ON ROAD TO BAGHDAD," "WORLD PROTESTS WAR ON IRAQ," AND "IRAQIS WELCOMING TROOPS - FRANKS." (GULF NEWS)
--"ALLIES CLAIM BIG GAINS," AND "LIFE IN UAE NORMAL, SAY MOHAMMED (BIN RASHID AL MAKTOUM, CROWN PRINCE OF DUBAI AND MINISTER OF DEFENSE)." (KHALEEJ TIMES)
--"COALITION FORCES DRAWING CLOSER TO BAGHDAD" AND "FORCES CONTROL NASIRIYYAH AND UM QASR AND ENCIRCLE BASRA." (AL ITTIHAD)
--"AMERICAN ATTACKS BURN BAGHDAD" AND "HUNDREDS OF CIVILIAN CASUALTIES, INCLUDING 57 IN HALABJA." (AL BAYAN)

3. ABU DHABI TV'S LIVE COVERAGE OF THE WAR CENTERS IN BAGHDAD WITH ANALYSIS AND COMMENTARY FROM THE ABU DHABI TV NEWS CENTER. ABU DHABI TV CONTACTS REPORT THAT ADTV'S FOOTAGE FROM BAGHDAD AND ELSEWHERE IS CURRENTLY USED IN OVER 160 COUNTRIES. ABU DHABI TV DID NOT/NOT CARRY FOOTAGE OF THE CIVILIAN CASUALTIES IN BASRA AND HALABJA AS ON AL JAZEERA. ALSO, AL JAZEERA AND ABU DHABI TV WERE THE ONLY ARAB MEDIA TO ASK QUESTIONS TO GEN. TOMMY FRANKS DURING HIS 3/22 PRESS BRIEFING IN DOHA.

4. ON 3/23, ABU DHABI-BASED SEMI-GOVERNMENT "AL ITTIHAD" REPORTED UAE FEDERAL NATIONAL COUNCIL (FNC) SPEAKER SAEED AL KINDI AS SAYING "THIS SITUATION OF WAR AND INSTABILITY IN THE WORLD WAS CREATED BY THE IRAQI REGIME WHO DID NOT RESPOND TO SHEIKH ZAYED'S INITIATIVE."

5. NOTING THE BEST SOLUTION FOR THE CURRENT CRISIS, "AL ITTIHAD" EDITORIALIZED ON 3/23:

"... BLIND, DEAF, AND PROUD, THE RULERS OF BAGHDAD JUST IGNORE ALL ADVICE GIVEN TO THEM BY THE DEVOTED PEOPLE OF THE ARAB NATION. THEY WERE WARNED THAT THE CONSEQUENCES OF THEIR ACTIONS COULD LEAD TO A CRISIS. THEY WERE ALSO ASKED TO BE WISE IN ORDER TO SOLVE THIS CRISIS, WHICH WAS A RESULT OF YEARS OF THEIR OWN ACTIONS ... WE HOPE THEY LEAVE NOW WHILE THEY STILL HAVE THEIR DIGNITY AND BEFORE THEY ARE FACED AND SURPRISED WITH THE HUMILIATION OF IMPRISONMENT, WHICH AWAITS THE DEFEATED IN ANY WAR. WE HOPE THEY LEAVE NOW AND ABANDON THE RUINS OF THEIR PALACES AND THE HEADQUARTERS OF THEIR STUBBORNNESS AND CRUELTY."

6. COMMENTING ON THE SURPRISING DURATION AND INTENSITY OF THE WAR, ABU DHABI-BASED PAN-ARAB DAILY "AKHBAR AL ARAB" EDITORIALIZED ON 3/23:

"... AMERICAN OFFICIALS CONFESSED THAT THIS IS GOING TO BE A HARD AND LONG WAR. THIS WAS ONLY AFTER THE THIRD DAY OF WAR, WHEN AMERICANS WERE FACED WITH A NUMBER OF SURPRISES, SUCH AS UNANTICIPATED RESISTANCE IN SOME AREAS. THIS INDICATES THAT THIS WAR WILL BE LONGER AND LOSSES WILL EXCEED WASHINGTON'S EXPECTATIONS ..."

7. NOTING WORLDWIDE OPPOSITION TO THE WAR, DUBAI-BASED BUSINESS-ORIENTED "AL BAYAN" EDITORIALIZED ON 3/23:

"... WAR IS ALWAYS GOING TO BE HATED, AND WE ARABS DO NOT PREFER

IT (WAR) AS A SOLUTION TO ANY CRISIS. WHILE WATCHING THIS CHAPTER OF THE WAR, OUR HEARTS ARE WITH OUR PEOPLE IN IRAQ, WE ARE ALL PRAYING TO GOD THAT THE CHILDREN, WOMEN AND MEN OF THE LAND OF MESOPOTAMIA WILL BE SAFE. THIS IS THE LAND OF A PATIENT PEOPLE WHO HAVE SUFFERED MORE THAN ANY NATION IN OUR REGION HAS EVER SUFFERED ..."

18. DESCRIBING THE WAR AS ILLEGITIMATE, SHARJAH-BASED PAN-ARAB DAILY "AL-KHALEEJ" EDITORIALIZED ON 3/23:

"... IF THE U.S. SUCCEEDS IN IRAQ, FRANCE AND RUSSIA EXPECT THAT IT WILL CREATE A NEW INTERNATIONAL SYSTEM THAT HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH INTERNATIONAL LEGITIMACY OR THAT WILL PLACE INTERNATIONAL LEGITIMACY UNDER ITS (U.S.) CONTROL. U.S. WILL CARRY THIS (WAR) OUT IN ORDER TO BECOME THE ONLY POWER IN THE WORLD THAT CONTROLS ITS POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC DESTINY AND SECURITY. THIS WAR IS ILLEGITIMATE AND WAS STARTED WITHOUT SECURITY COUNCIL SUPPORT AND AGAINST THE WILL OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY, AND ITS CONSEQUENCES WILL DEFINITELY BE THE SAME ..."

19. ARGUING THE U.S. ADMINISTRATION HAS NOT LAID OUT A CLEAR POST-WAR STRATEGY FOR IRAQ, DUBAI-BASED ENGLISH-LANGUAGE DAILY "GULF NEWS" EDITOIALIZED ON 3/23:

"... THE U.S. HAS NOT FORWARDED ANY DETAILS ON ITS PLANS ONCE IT TAKES CONTROL OF ALL IRAQI CITIES. THIS BRINGS US TO QUESTION THE FORM OF GOVERNMENT THAT WILL RULE IRAQ WHEN THIS TAKES PLACE. IT IS NOT CLEAR WHETHER IT WOULD BE A GOVERNMENT COMPRISING THE IRAQI OPPOSITION OR WHETHER WASHINGTON WILL ASSIGN AN AMERICAN GENERAL OR COMMANDER TO GOVERN IRAQ. IF THE LATTER IS AMERICA'S INTENTION, THE EXECUTION OF THE ACTION IS WITHOUT A DOUBT AN OCCUPATION OF THE COUNTRY RATHER THAN 'LIBERATION' AS THE AMERICANS HAVE CALLED IT ... THE UN IS THE ONLY BODY FULLY CAPABLE OF OVERSEEING THE PROCESS OF REBUILDING A COUNTRY THAT HAS BEEN TORN BY WAR AND CRIPPLED BY ECONOMIC SANCTIONS ... THE TIME HAS COME AT LAST FOR THE ORGANIZATION TO BECOME ENGAGED IN THE REBUILDING OF A NEW IRAQ - ONE THAT IS GOVERNED BY IRAQIS AND CATERS TO THE PEOPLE OF IRAQ."

WAHBA